

Among THE STARS

A Publication of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development



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March 2006

Three-Star Reaches Out

New Orleans realizing the true meaning of community revitalization

What makes a community a community?

The buildings, the people, the leadership, a convention center, a school?

Recently, ECD Community Development Director Melinda Keifer traveled to New Orleans and found the answer.

Keifer was part of an assessment team put together by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and facilitated in New Orleans by the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans.

The field for the volunteer program, which began in October, has been a moving target based on current need.

With representatives from Oklahoma City and the Metro Nashville Historic Zoning Commission, the team surveyed residential and commercial properties in five of the city's 16 local or national register historic districts. The focus was on properties that were slated for demolition.

After two full weeks of surveying the districts, it appears that over 90 percent of the properties will be saved and should have never been on the demolition list.

"The experience in New Orleans has given me a new energy for revitalization of communities in Tennessee," said Keifer. "I realize that if there is hope in that level of detriment, there is no limit to where our communities could go with a portion of directed planning, dedication to execution and driven results."

Tennessee's Three-Star program received much attention from across the nation for its unique approach to community revitalization and economic development strategies.



Above, a boarded-up residence door reads "Not sale @ any \$...I'm staying put!" At right, a sign reads "Go away unless you bring love and peace. I sleep sometimes. God never sleeps." Signs such as these depict the tenacious mindset of communities in New Orleans.



Some things to consider...

At left, Melinda Keifer, right, presents Developer Buzz Olsen, left, with a check from the City of Cookeville, who adopted Bay St. Louis, Mississippi for its hurricane relief efforts.



- When the physical environment is gone - the community development foundation is all that is left.
- Each sector must hold each other responsible for their part of the foundation.
- Three-Star requires buy-in from local leadership and citizens - working together for the common good of the community.
- A community is dependent on all its different components succeeding - when one piece is missing, it shows and it stifles all other progress.
- A strong community is one where the "buy in" is balanced between the public and private sector and one that pays attention to growth, public services, private property responsibilities and blight.
- Communities all over the state are working hard to strengthen their foundations through Three-Star.

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

There have been many exciting things happening in economic and community development recently. The results of the partnerships we have established with communities across the state have been seen on many fronts.



I am certainly happy that the Southern Growth Policies Board, a bipartisan public policy think tank devoted to strengthening the South's economy, has recognized the revamped Three-Star program as a "best practices model" and a Southern leader in community certification programs. This distinction is evidence that all the hard work you and your community are putting forward is not going unnoticed by other communities across the country.

The benefits of the program do

not just involve national recognition and long-time economic success, but your communities are also already receiving financial incentives. Your investment has also seen returns to the coffers of your community. As a result of having Three-Star status, communities have realized \$348,262 in savings through the FastTrack Infrastructure Development Program and the Community Development Block Grant program. On top of this, we are delighted at the increased momentum of the Tennessee Leadership Center. I hope that you are already taking advantage of this resource for dynamic training in community development.

We look forward to success and progression in 2006. We hope that you are as excited as we are.

Matthew Kisber

— Matthew Kisber
Commissioner, Tennessee Department of
Economic & Community Development

REAPING THE BENEFITS

There are many benefits to acquiring Three-Star status, some of which are intangible. Besides the potential economic development benefits that result from effective strategic planning, many Three-Star communities have already realized the program's financial incentives.

To date, Three-Star communities have received \$232,267 in savings in the FastTrack Infrastructure Development Program and \$115,995 in Community

Development Block Grant savings. This equates to \$348,262 in funding that would not otherwise been a benefit to these communities. This figure does not include savings resulting from the Three-Star partnership with ECD's Energy Division for energy-saving funding opportunities.



STATUS OF THE STARS ★★★★★

Three-Star Program Prepares for Another Successful Year

A new year has arrived and with each new year comes new expectations and resolutions. By examining the progress that occurred in the program in 2005, we are directing steps to achieve that same kind of success. This has become a top priority for the community development staff at ECD.

"We are pleased with the momentum triggered by the revamp of the Three-Star program in 2005," said ECD Commissioner Matthew Kisber. "But the work doesn't stop there. We are determined to continuously improve in our community development efforts. Through sustainable community development, economic development becomes more and more viable."

ECD staff has set four major initiatives for 2006 for the Three-



Three-Star community leaders participate in Level I and II regional workshops in January. Communities discussed development strategies and plans for 2006.

Star Program. After revitalizing the program and mobilizing communities across the state to make community development a priority last year, this year will find a dedication to equipping community leaders to continue that positive momentum. The initiatives will focus on continuing the training of community leaders to be the 'best of the best' when it comes to making their communities better places for economic development today and in the future.

The four major initiatives are as follows:

1. Conduct successful regional meetings involving community representatives to review the importance of strategic planning and priority development, to review national and state economic trends, to review program initiatives and to introduce the Tennessee Leadership Center partnership.
2. Conduct Community Leadership Workshops to be held in local communities and directed by ECD's Three-Star staff. The purpose of these workshops is to provide an opportunity for community leaders to gather and apply three to five priority labels to items on their community's strategic plan. Three-Star staff will then make recommendations on how to make those priorities a reality.
3. Promote the creation of "2006 Next Steps" for community strategic plans. The "Next Step Plan" are short-term goals that will become a part of their continuing strategic plan. The fifth year will then be added and adopted by the legislative body by August 15.
4. To plan and execute a Level III community day-long workshop with the Vanderbilt Center for Better Health at no cost to the communities to serve as an "out-of-the-box" opportunity for communities to dialogue and learn effective strategies for community economic development.

ACHIEVING STELLAR PERFORMANCE

Three-Star Program Shines

The Southern Growth Policies Board, a bipartisan public policy think tank devoted to strengthening the South's economy, has recognized the Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development's (ECD) revamped Three-Star program as a best practices model and Southern leader in community certification programs.

Based in Research Triangle Park, N.C., the Southern Growth Policies Board was formed by the region's governors in 1971. The private non-profit organization develops and advances visionary economic development policies by

providing a forum for partnership and dialog among a diverse cross-section of the region's governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic and community development sectors.

The Southern Growth Policies Board is supported by memberships from 13 Southern states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. For more information, visit www.southern.org/idea-bank/regionalism/tn2.shtml

SHINING STARS: THREE-STAR NOTABLES

★ Crockett County completed the TVA Megaprogram and now is the home of a 1,600 acre certified site.

★ The Weakley County Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the Weakley County Board of Education, has implemented an Accredited Youth Leadership Program. Students in the program can receive classroom credit for their participation.

★ Industrial boards in Tullahoma, Manchester and Coffee County merged into one industrial board in July. Participants report that the past six months have been very smooth thanks to the hard work and successful partnerships and is sure to result in growth for the entire area.

★ The Gateway Productions program in Cumberland County continues to be a success in fulfilling the tourism and youth leadership components and promoting community features while giving young students an opportunity at real world, high tech training.



West Tennessee Auto Park, Crockett County



Accredited Youth Leadership Program, Weakley County



Gateway Productions Staff, Crossville, TN

FROM THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S DESK

Our entire community development staff is poised to continue our momentum from 2005 into our 2006 program year. Our major goal in 2006



is to concentrate on the strategic plan each of the communities formulated under the 2005 program. Level I and II communities will be required to conduct a leadership workshop in their community to focus on their strategic plan and to develop both short-term and long-term priorities. Our staff will work with these communities to develop strategies in "best practice" methods to achieve their goals. We believe that communities should be able to measure their performance and effectiveness in reaching their goals. We want to continue to expand the services we began in 2005 in assisting communities in being prepared for industrial development, expansion of tourism

'Our major goal in 2006 is to concentrate on the strategic plan each community formulated under the 2005 program.'

opportunities, and creating a positive environment for the expansion of retail and service companies. We will continue our assistance in customer service training and retiree recruitment. Level III communities will be offered a unique opportunity in 2006 to participate in a workshop with other Level III communities. This workshop will focus on how to make our communities even more successful by identifying areas of economic development that need a concentrated effort by our division to assist in expanding those opportunities. Also, Level III communities will be focusing

on strategic planning and regional initiatives.

We are excited about 2006 as we continue to develop our partnerships with economic development organizations throughout the state. In particular, we're very excited about the role that the Tennessee Leadership Center will play in community development. The knowledge and expertise of TLC will be invaluable to all of our communities.

I want to thank all our communities from around the state who have shown such a positive "can do" attitude during some difficult economic times. By working together we can make a difference in the lives of those citizens who call our Tennessee communities "home!"

— Joe Barker
Assistant Commissioner,
Community Development

Tennessee Leadership Center: Leading Into The Future

The Tennessee Leadership Center has seen a lot of progress since its inception at the Governor's Conference on Economic and Community Development in August 2005. This public-private nonprofit organization was founded to be a resource of community development training for Tennessee communities.

The Center's first major contribution was to assist in ECD's Three-Star strategic planning program. To date, just some of the accomplishments of the center have been as follows:

- Conducted a strategic planning training workshop for the community development staff of ECD and the regional development districts
- Conducted a follow-up strategic planning training workshop for the Regional Economic Development Specialists (REDS) staff of ECD
- Provided assistance in modifying the Three-Star program; conducted six



Panel discussion at ECD's community development work session where community development leaders from across the state gathered to discuss how to work together towards a common goal.

regional workshops for over 400 community leaders announcing the changes to the Three-Star program and providing training in strategic planning

- Developed a community economic development assessment tool in partnership with the Vanderbilt Center for Better Health (VCBH) for use by Three-Star communities this year.
- Presented several strategic planning leadership workshops for communities around Tennessee (Hendersonville and Roane County)

- Scheduled to facilitate at least three strategic planning workshops for communities across Tennessee through March.

TLC also developed a calendar of training sessions at both a national and statewide level that will assist communities in planning what to attend and also when to schedule their own meetings to avoid schedule conflicts.

TLC has already begun to make an impact on community economic development in Tennessee. Be sure to take advantage of what this resource has to offer.

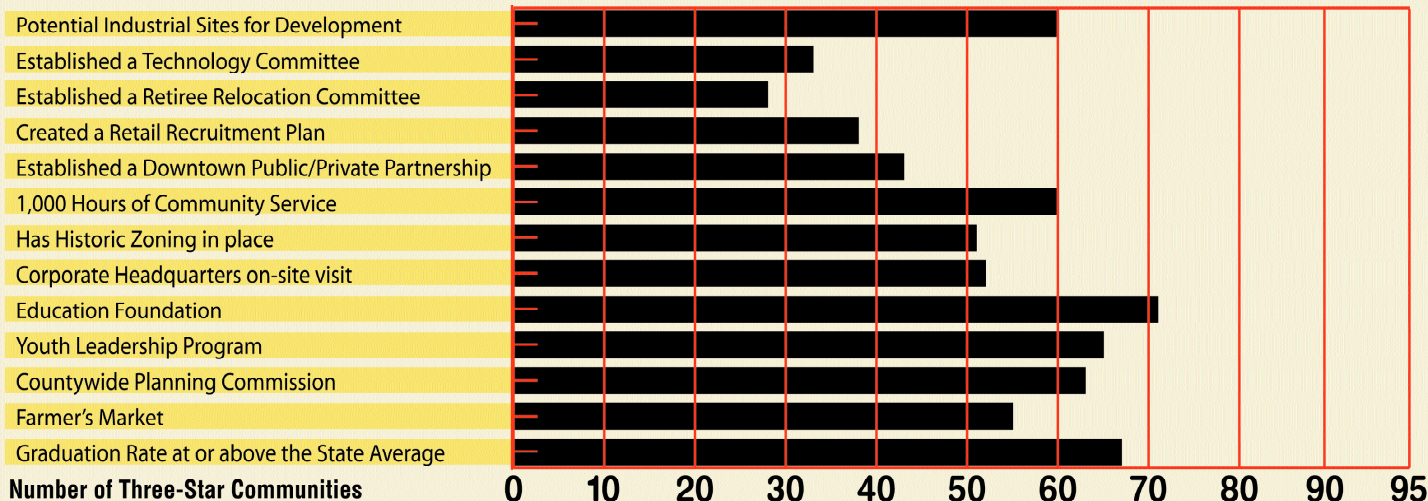
This information is available at www.tennesseeleadershipcenter.com



Charting Our Course

THREE-STAR DASHBOARD

Seventy-five counties and five cities now have a comprehensive five-year economic and community development strategic plan which has been ratified by their local legislative body.



Number of Three-Star Communities

Source: Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

Three-Star Partnerships That Work

Governor Phil Bredesen and Commissioner Matthew Kisber often emphasize that partnership has to be a driving force in economic and community development. In order for our state to succeed in economic development, its state agencies and communities must succeed at contributing to that end. Three-Star communities across the state have exhibited partnership as they work toward obtaining and maintaining Three-Star status. Here are just a few examples:

The cities of Clifton, Collinwood and Waynesboro in Wayne County each held a community meeting to provide a platform for each community's citizens to voice their comments regarding current and future development projects. The meetings were instrumental in disseminating and gathering information that will potentially allow for coordinated efforts between the local governing boards of the communities.

For the first time in the program's history, the cities of Humboldt, Milan and Trenton in Gibson County have joined to create a county-wide Three-Star community. Currently, there is a total of 10 cities participating in this program.

As a means of fulfilling the visitor development component of the Three-Star program, the Coffee County Three-Star program joined a regional partnership by supporting the "Spirits and Wine Trail." The tourism effort consists of Middle Tennessee wineries and distilleries including George Dickel Distillery in Tullahoma, Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg, Pritchard's Rum Distillery in Kelso, Tri-Star Winery in Shelbyville and Beans Creek Winery in Manchester. The partnership has launched a marketing campaign including the creation of a Web site and the distribution of 200,000 brochures in welcome centers in

Alabama, Kentucky, Georgia and Tennessee. The group is also working with the U. S. Department of Commerce, International Division, to promote the themed trail to European audiences. The tour kick-off is April 2 at the Manchester/Coffee County Conference Center.

NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership is a joint economic development partnership between Bluff City, Bristol, Kingsport and Sullivan County. While the entities have worked jointly on Three-Star activities in the past, this is the first united effort to market the community as a unit. The community leaders through the Partnership pulled together the economic development staffs, business and industrial parks and financial resources of all the cities and the county. The synergy of the Partnership creates a much stronger presence in the business recruitment market.

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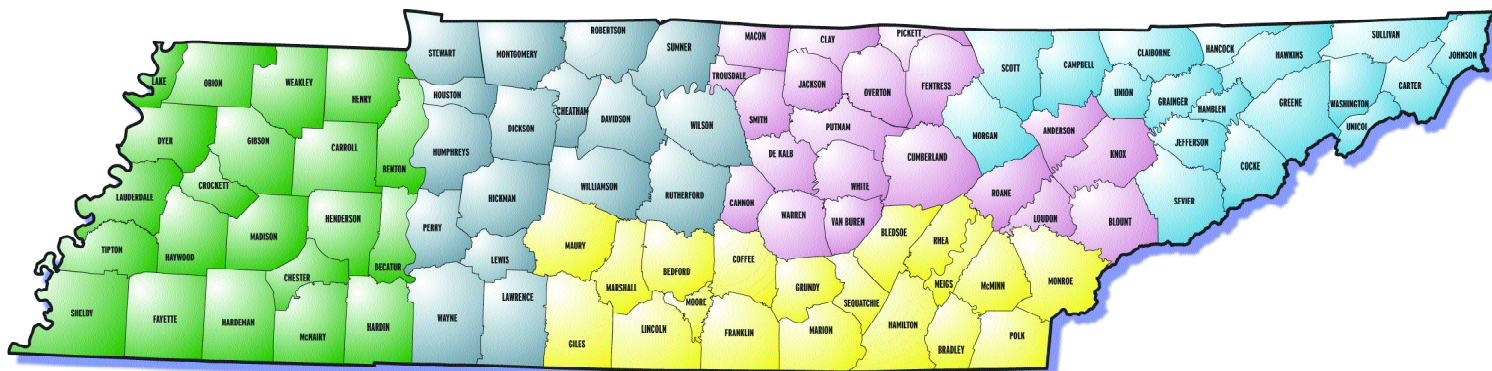


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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 10

Tourism & Economic
Development Workshop,
Gallatin

March 14

Economic Development
Summit for West TN., Martin

March 21

TLC Community Leadership
Series -- Becoming a More
Effective Communicator*

March 22

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Negotiating for Better
Results*

March 28-29

TDDA Annual Conference,
Nashville, Sheraton

April 5-6

USDA Rural Development
Conference, Cookeville

April 18

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Developing Leadership
Skills for the New Economy*

April 19

TLC Community Leadership
Series - How to Diversify the
Rural Economy*

April 20-21

Main Street/TN. Preservation
Conference, Knoxville

March 20-April 6

at Kennedy Center*.A festival
honoring country music past
and present!!!

May 15

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Understanding Basic
Economic Development (in
Jackson, Tennessee)*

May 17

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Understanding Basic
Economic Development (in
Nashville, Tennessee)*

May 19

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Understanding Basic
Economic Development (in
Knoxville, Tennessee)*

June 4-8

National Trust Main Street
Conference, New Orleans, LA

June 20

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Business Etiquette*

June 21

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Training the Board for
More Effective Participation*

October 17

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Site Selection and
Working with Business
Prospects*

October 18

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Creating a More
Entrepreneurial Community*

November 14

TLC Community Leadership
Series - Downtown
Revitalization*

November 15

TLC Community Leadership

Series - Marketing the
Community*

*For more information, visit
ECD online at
www.tnecd.gov.*

SAVE THE DATE**September 12-13**

53rd Annual
Governor's
Conference on
Economic and
Community
Development

Nashville, TN

More details to
come...